

From: Michelle Stecklein
To: 'microsoft.atr(a)usdoj.gov'
Date: 1/24/02 8:03pm
Subject: One consumers input

To whom it may concern,

It seems to be that if, in fact, it has been decided that Microsoft used its market power in restraint of trade, the settlement ought not further Microsoft's strength in the market. By giving a large amount of software to the education market, Microsoft is ensuring that they will dominate a segment which they are not yet fully entrenched. Further, the cost of producing the software is not equivalent to the market value of the software. If the legal remedy includes a fine which is paid with donated software valued at market price, Microsoft is paying a smaller fine than what has actually been levied.

If Microsoft is guilty of restraint of trade and if a fine is the best remedy, it seems that the fine ought to be paid in cash to those on whom the damage was inflicted -- businesses and consumers who purchased the product.

The real question is whether a fine is enough to cause Microsoft to act in a more sportsman-like manner. I doubt that there is a fine large enough. It seems that as long as Microsoft controls the operating systems so completely, they will always be able to squeeze the next potential software application competitor out of the market. While it may not be the right long term action to split the company, it may be right long term action to force Microsoft to open up the source code for the operating system.

It is clearly a complex case. And I have not invested the time and energy nor have the experience of someone of your position. I appreciate the effort that you are putting in to the case. I trust that you will make the just decisions even though many special interest groups may be pushing you to take the path of least resistance.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Stecklein

Michelle Stecklein
Managing Director
Thompson Clive & Partners Inc.
3000 Sand Hill Road
Building One, Suite 185
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Office 650 854 0314
Fax 650 854 0670

michelle @tevc.com